

(323) 881-2401

October 23, 2003

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE THE ACQUISITION PROCESS FOR
A SIKORSKY FIREHAWK HELICOPTER
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD ACTING AS THE GOVERNING
BODY OF THE CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT:**

1. Authorize the Consolidated Fire Protection District (District) to begin the acquisition process for a Sikorsky Firehawk helicopter at a total estimated cost of \$14.5 million, based on the anticipated availability of Measure B funds. This purchase request exceeds the \$250,000 fixed asset threshold established by your Board and requires your approval to move forward with the solicitation, contract negotiation and acquisition process.
2. Authorize the Fire Chief to issue a Letter of Intent to Sikorsky advising them of the Board's authorization to begin the acquisition process.
3. Instruct the Fire Chief and the Purchasing Agent, with the assistance of County Counsel, to:
 - proceed with the sole source acquisition of a Sikorsky Firehawk helicopter and the solicitation of all required outfitting work by separate vendors;
 - negotiate contracts with Sikorsky and the outfitting vendors; and
 - return to the Board for approval of the final contracts.

4. Instruct the Chief Administrative Officer to begin working with the Fire Chief and the Purchasing Agent on arranging lease purchase financing for the acquisition of this Firehawk.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Based on our experience with the two Firehawks purchased in 2000, the District is recommending the acquisition of an additional Sikorsky Firehawk helicopter utilizing Measure B funding allocated to the District for this purpose. The Measure B funding proposal, which includes a \$2.0 million allocation to the District for leasing costs of an additional helicopter for the Antelope Valley, has not been formally approved by your Board. The District will return to your Board requesting approval of funding for the helicopter lease costs. Currently, a District helicopter is deployed to the Antelope Valley only during nighttime hours due to other demands for the helicopter during daylight hours. This service will be expanded as soon as possible to a critically needed 24-hour deployment based on the anticipated availability of Measure B funds. The immediate acquisition of this additional helicopter will ensure that the 24-hour deployment of a helicopter to the Antelope Valley, consistent with the objectives of Measure B approved by the voters in 2002, will have limited long-range adverse impact on the District's fleet of helicopters.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

This purchase supports the County's Strategic Goal #2 for Workforce Excellence, by enhancing the quality and productivity of the District's emergency services.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

The estimated total purchase cost of the helicopter is \$14.5 million, and will be financed for a term up to 10 years with an annual debt service not exceeding \$2.0 million. It is anticipated that the funding for the lease will be provided by \$2.0 million in Measure B funding provided to the District. The District, together with Health Services and the Chief Administrative Office, will return to your Board to request approval of funding to pay lease financing costs concurrently with the request for approval of the final Sikorsky purchase contract and lease-purchase contract. The annual operating costs of the additional Firehawk will be financed in the District's budget with current financing sources. These annual costs include approximately \$405,000 for hull insurance and \$325,000 for the Total Assurance Program (TAP) for parts and component replacements.

based on flight hours. These operating costs will not begin until the District takes possession of the Firehawk during 2004-05 (see below).

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:

Sikorsky has informed the District that if a commitment can be made now for a Firehawk helicopter, delivery can be made by December 2004 so that outfitting can then begin on the EMS interior, avionics and other equipment unique to the District's requirements. This is approximately one year faster than Sikorsky's regular lead-time. (By comparison, the District was able to obtain two Firehawks in 2000 with a minimal lead-time because the Sikorsky factory had just had a foreign government reduce a helicopter order.) Upon approval by your Board, the Fire Chief will issue a Letter of Intent to Sikorsky. This Letter is not a financial commitment and can be rescinded if necessary with no penalty. This Letter will only ensure delivery by December 2004 of one Firehawk once contracts have been approved by your Board.

The District will make every effort to establish a 24-hour helicopter in the Antelope Valley as soon as possible within existing personnel and helicopter resources. This means that the District's current helicopter fleet will have to be flown more, resulting in an increase to helicopter maintenance downtime. In consideration of the long lead time to manufacture and outfit the Firehawk helicopter, your Board's approval to begin the process to acquire a Firehawk to expand the District's fleet of helicopters is vital so that the 24-hour helicopter service based in the Antelope Valley can continue into the future with no adverse impact on the District's overall mission.

CONTRACTING PROCESS:

This is a commodity purchase under the statutory authority of the County Purchasing Agent. The purchase will be requisitioned through, and accomplished by, the Purchasing Agent in accordance with the County's Purchasing and Contracting policies and procedures.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS):

Approval of these recommendations will allow the District to implement as soon as possible the 24-hour deployment of a helicopter to the Antelope Valley to provide trauma transport services, consistent with the objectives of Measure B, with limited long-range effect on the condition of the District's helicopter fleet.

CONCLUSION:

Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors, the Executive Office, Board of Supervisors is requested to return adopted copies of this letter to:

1. Los Angeles County Consolidated Fire Protection District
Materials Management Division
5801 S. Eastern Avenue, Suite 100
Commerce, CA 90040
Attention: James Ealey, Division Chief
2. Internal Services Department
Purchasing Division
1100 N. Eastern Avenue, Room 102
Los Angeles, CA 90063
Attention: Joe Sandoval, Division Manager

Respectfully submitted,



P. MICHAEL FREEMAN

PMF:at

- c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller
Internal Services
Health Services
Emergency Medical Services Agency